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ABSTRACT

A study examined the relationship between two kinds of language competence, linguistic and pragmatic, within the larger domain of the learner's overall competence. Specifically, it investigated whether linguistic competence is (1) necessary, and (2) sufficient for pragmatic competence. Subjects were 14 students of French at Indiana University and a control group of nine native speakers of French. Three tests (a standardized multiple-choice test of French, a role-play questionnaire, and a discourse completion test) were administered. Results strongly suggest that linguistic competence is a prerequisite to pragmatic competence but that it does not itself guarantee pragmatic competence. It appears that a certain level of linguistic ability must be attained before learners are able to convey their message with sociocultural appropriateness. Nevertheless, the level of linguistic competence needed for adequate communication in given language use situations does not necessarily assure learners of sociocultural appropriateness in these contexts. (MSE)

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Linguistic and Pragmatic Competence: Their Relationship in the Overall Competence of the Language Learner

Sheila Hoffman-Hicks

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Linguistic and Pragmatic Competence: Their Relationship in the Overall Competence of the Language Learner

Sheila Hoffman-Hicks

While linguistic competence has long been the focus of analyses investigating learners' developing language abilities, research on the acquisition of the socio-cultural aspects of language use has emphasized the crucial role pragmatic competence plays in successful communication. This study examines both types of competence -- linguistic and pragmatic -- and aims to shed light on the largely unexamined issue of their relationship within the larger domain of the learner's overall competence.

Fourteen students of French at an American university and a control group of nine native speakers of French participated in the study. Three tests instruments -- a standardized multiple-choice test of French, a role play questionnaire, and a discourse completion test -- were administered in an effort to tease out learners' linguistic and pragmatic abilities. Results strongly suggest that linguistic competence is a necessary prerequisite to pragmatic competence but that it does not itself guarantee pragmatic competence. It appears that a certain level of linguistic ability must be attained before learners are able to convey their message with socio-cultural appropriateness. Nevertheless, the level of linguistic competence needed for adequate communication in given language-use situations does not necessarily assure learners of socio-cultural appropriateness in these contexts.

INTRODUCTION

An abundance of research has addressed the limitations of the Chomskyan concept of *knowing* language by asserting the importance of the socio-cultural aspects of language use (Gumperz, 1971; Hymes, 1972b; Schmidt & Richards, 1980; Fraser et al., 1980). Such research has shown that in addition to linguistic or grammatical competence (a knowledge of the syntax, phonology, and vocabulary of a language), language users must also possess pragmatic competence (a knowledge of how to use the language appropriately) to communicate effectively. The need to attain both types of competence makes the second or foreign language learner's task particularly challenging.

While research in pragmatics such as Varonis & Gass (1985), Beebe & Takahashi (1989a), and Wolfson (1989b) has brought to light the critical role pragmatic competence plays in the overall competence of the language learner, other studies (Eisenstein & Bodman, 1986; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, 1989; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1990; Wieland, 1990) have emphasized the difficulty in attaining such competence. Bardovi-Harlig's and Hartford's studies in ESL, for example, have

shown that at the advanced level, linguistic competence is not sufficient for pragmatic competence. These studies have shown that even highly proficient learners of English, graduate students enrolled at an American university, are often unable to use the language appropriately in given contexts. Likewise, Wieland's research on the pragmatic skills of women who had been living in France for a period of two to twenty-six years, provided startling evidence suggesting that nonnative speakers may never attain both native-like linguistic and native-like pragmatic competence.

These studies, however, examine only the skills of very advanced learners and, therefore, leave open the development-related question of whether grammatical competence is a necessary prerequisite for pragmatic competence. Moreover, since the subjects who participated in these studies were living in the host environment at the time of data collection, these studies do not focus on the situation of foreign language learning in a formal setting. This study considers these two aspects by investigating the relationship of the linguistic and pragmatic competence of intermediate-level learners in the foreign language setting.

The results of the studies mentioned above provide interesting insights for language acquisition research since they suggest that the acquisition of linguistic and pragmatic competence in the target language setting does not necessarily occur at the same rate, that pragmatic competence appears to lag somehow in the course of development. One might assume that this would also be the case for foreign language learners. In fact, it seems likely that the difference in the development of the two types of competence may be even more apparent for this latter group since, as classroom learners, their exposure to the socio-cultural aspects of language use would be significantly more limited. These are the issues addressed in the present study. More formally, the research questions posed are:

1) Is linguistic competence **necessary** for pragmatic competence?

2) Is linguistic competence **sufficient** for pragmatic competence?

Learners' performance on both linguistic and pragmatic tasks will be compared and analyzed in an effort to answer these questions.

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects for this study included fourteen students of French at Indiana University. Twelve of the subjects were female and two were male. All subjects were pursuing majors or minors in French and were enrolled in third- or fourth- year level courses at the time of the data collection. A control group of nine native speakers of French also participated in the study.

All of the subjects were preparing for participation in an overseas study program in France during the 1990-91 academic year. This particular group was selected for motivational reasons. It was assumed that students who would eventually

be living in the target culture would be more concerned with not only their linguistic abilities but also their pragmatic skills than students who did not plan to study abroad. That is to say, they would likely be more attentive to or perhaps more sensitive to learning about all facets of meeting and maintaining relationships with native speakers.

Test Instruments

The research questions posed in this study investigate the relation of linguistic and pragmatic competence within the larger domain of the learner's overall competence[1]. Such a statement implies that these two areas of competence are somehow separable entities. It is clear, however, that competence in a language is not a concrete whole which can be neatly divided into separate linguistic and pragmatic components, and no such claim is made here. Nevertheless, in an effort to gain insight into the intriguing, though slippery, issue of what it means to *know* a language, an attempt was made in this study to isolate these areas of competence. By drawing on the capabilities of various data collection techniques to elicit different types of data, linguistic and pragmatic competence were tapped independently of each other. The data obtained from each task thus offer a relatively distinct focus.

To measure linguistic competence in the target language, a standardized multiple-choice test of French was administered which included grammar, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension components. This test is routinely administered as part of the requirements for application to the overseas study program. Students' scores on the test are generally taken into consideration when determining acceptance into the program.

Two tasks were administered for the measurement of pragmatic competence. The first task, a role play questionnaire, was issued to evaluate the subjects' receptive pragmatic knowledge. This questionnaire is a modified version of one developed by Raffaldini (1987) in a related study. The subjects were instructed to imagine that they were in France and were interacting with native speakers (NSs) of French in various situations. For each of the ten items on this multiple-choice questionnaire, the subjects were provided the *tone* and the *stimulus* for the interaction. The tone was described as an explanation of the subject's attitude toward the other speaker, e.g. polite, reproving, worried, persuasive. The stimulus described the situation and stated where the interaction was taking place (in a cafe, at the subject's apartment, etc.) and with whom the subject was speaking (a classmate, neighbor, professor, etc.). The tone and the stimulus were given in English so that the subjects would fully understand each situation.

Only scenarios in which the subjects might realistically find themselves were included. Moreover, since the subjects were instructed to imagine themselves in each situation, they were not required to play the role of another person who might be of a different age, sex, or social status.

Consider a sample item from this questionnaire in (1) below:

(1) TONE: courteous STIMULUS: The older woman in whose house you are living is out of town and a friend of hers calls you to invite you to

dinner. You don't want to offend her, but you have no desire to go, so you decline the invitation politely. You say:

a) Merci Madame, c'est très gentil, mais je vous prie de m'excuser. Il faudrait que je finisse un devoir pour demain.
Thank you, ma'am. That's very kind, but I must ask you to excuse me. It's necessary for me to finish an assignment for tomorrow.

b) C'est très gentil de votre part de m'inviter, Madame, mais je ne peux pas y aller ce soir. J'ai beaucoup de boulot à faire pour demain, et je dois travailler.
It's really nice of you to invite me, ma'am, but I can't come tonight. I have tons of stuff to do for tomorrow, and I have to work.

c) Merci beaucoup, Madame. Mais je ne peux vraiment pas ce soir. J'ai un devoir à finir pour demain, et je crois qu'il serait plus sage que je travaille ce soir.
Thank you very much, ma'am, but I really can't tonight. I have an assignment to finish for tomorrow, and I think it would be wiser if I worked tonight.

d) Pardon, Madame, j'ai trop de choses à faire pour demain. Je vais travailler toute la nuit.
I'm sorry, ma'am, I have too many things to do for tomorrow. I'm going to work all night.

In this refusal scenario, several clues were provided to help determine the most appropriate way of declining the dinner invitation. For example, the fact that the person with whom the subject is living is an older woman and a friend of the caller suggests something about the status relationship involved. Furthermore, the tone is marked as "courteous", which is supported by the word "politely" in the stimulus. Finally, the phrase "You don't want to offend her" emphasizes the importance of choosing an appropriate response. All items on the questionnaire included clues of this type.

The four responses following each item were in French and were derived from two sources. A native speaker response was created by a team of native French speakers who, in Raffaldini's pilot study, judged it as most appropriate for the given situation. The three distractors were selected from responses provided by the pilot study subjects on an open-ended version of the task. In the present study, the subjects were asked to simply mark the most appropriate response for each situation. The native speaker control group, on the other hand, was instructed to rank the distractors in terms of the most to least appropriate, or native-like.

The second instrument for examining pragmatic competence was a discourse completion test (DCT). The format of the test was identical to that of the questionnaire except that, instead of multiple-choice responses, the items were left open-

ended. Subjects and control group participants were asked to write in the most appropriate response to each situation. Although research has shown that speech acts usually are not accomplished in a single utterance or turn (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Searle, 1976; Schmidt & Richards, 1980), the subjects were intentionally not asked to produce a complete dialogue for this task in order to be consistent with the responses elicited by the role play questionnaire. The stimuli presented in these items were different from those found in the role play questionnaire so that subjects would not be influenced by related responses.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Task 1: Linguistic Competence Test

Table 1. Linguistic competence test scores and rank.

RANK	NNS	RAW SCORE	% CORRECT
1	A	65	65
1	B	65	65
3	C	62	62
4	D	60	60
4	E	60	60
6	F	57	57
7	G	52	52
8	H	49	49
8	I	49	49
10	J	48	48
11	K	47	47
12	L	45	45
13	M	40	40
14	N	37	37

n=14

Table 1 presents the fourteen subjects' scores from the test measuring linguistic competence, which had one hundred possible points. The subjects (nonnative speakers (NNS)) are ranked from highest to lowest according to their percentage correct. Note that some of the subjects earned identical scores. The fact that no subjects performed higher than 65% and none performed below 37% on this test reflects the intermediate level of these learners and suggests that the test was of an appropriate level of difficulty for capturing their linguistic competence.

Task 2: Pragmatic Competence Role Play Questionnaire

Several steps were taken to analyze the data from the role play questionnaire used to evaluate pragmatic competence. First, the results provided by the NSs were tabulated. Recall that the NSs were instructed to rank the responses for each item

and not to simply mark the single most appropriate response. A mark of one signaled the best response, a four indicated the least appropriate, so that when the marks for each response were totaled, the lowest total score was considered to be the overall best response provided by NSs. The second lowest total score was considered to be second best, and so on.

The results revealed that the NSs were not in agreement on these rankings, particularly in the case of second and third best responses. For all but one item, however, it was clear which single response was overwhelmingly considered the best. That is, there was always one response which clearly received the fewest total points. Similarly, for each item, there was always at least one response which no NS marked as the best choice. Thus it could be safely claimed that one response was clearly *the best* and another clearly *not the best* choice[2].

Table 2. Role play questionnaire scores and rank.

RANK	NNS	RAW SCORE	% CORRECT
1	C	16	80
1	D	16	80
3	K	14	70
4	G	13	65
5	J	12	60
6	A	11	55
6	B	11	55
8	H	10	50
8	I	10	50
8	M	10	50
11	E	9	45
11	F	9	45
13	N	7	35
14	L	6	30

n=14

To determine the subjects' score on this task, their responses were compared to these two rankings: *best* and *not best*. Scoring for each item was carried out according to the following distribution. Subjects were given two points for marking the response judged as *best* by the NSs. They were given zero points for marking the response judged as *not best*[3]. For marking either of the other two possible responses, subjects were given one point since, although they were clearly not the *best* response, they were also not judged to be *not best* and therefore were at least somewhat acceptable to some native speaker judges.

Since there were ten items, the highest possible score on this task was 20 and the lowest possible score was 0, although no subject scored either of these extremes.

These scores are provided in Table 2. Again, the subjects are ranked according to percentage correct.

Comparing the Results

In order to answer the two research questions posed in this study -- that is, whether linguistic competence is (a) necessary and (b) sufficient for pragmatic competence -- subjects' performance in both areas of competence, linguistic and pragmatic, had to be compared. The difficulty of comparing subjects' scores on the linguistic component of the study with their scores on the pragmatic component, however, is illustrated in the cliched expression of comparing apples with oranges. For although we can arrive at numbers and statistics representing the results of each task, these numbers cannot necessarily be compared. They are not absolutes. Quantifying pragmatic abilities is a challenging task in and of itself; and when an attempt is made to correlate these figures with grammatical scores, for example, the difficulties are compounded.

To deal with this problem of comparing two types of data, an attempt was made to discover a possible link or variable common to the two sets of scores. The subjects' rank based on their performance on the two tasks was chosen as the means of comparison. These figures were provided in Tables 1 and 2. The rankings were analyzed as shown in Table 3 in order to gain insights into how subjects ranked relative to each other on the two tasks.

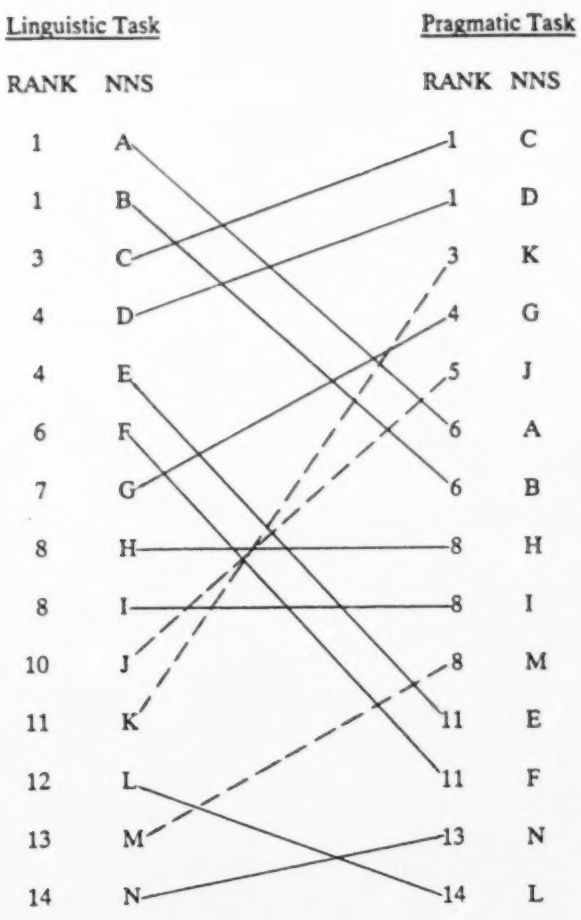
Addressing the Research Questions

Research question 1: Is linguistic competence necessary for pragmatic competence?

In response to the first research question, the results suggest that linguistic competence generally is a necessary prerequisite for pragmatic competence. Eleven of the fourteen subjects -- A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, L, and N -- performed similarly (within three rank positions) or worse on the pragmatic competence task than they did on the linguistic competence task. Or, to approach it from another direction, for only three subjects -- J, K, and M -- did linguistic competence not appear to be necessary for pragmatic competence. These subjects were able to perform relatively well on the pragmatic task despite fairly low scores on the linguistic task.

Some possible explanations for the individual variation exhibited by J, K, and M should be considered. To account for the performance of these subjects, two other variables were investigated: level of coursework and amount of time spent speaking French outside of the classroom. Level of coursework refers to the level of the course(s) in French in which the subject was enrolled at the time of data collection. Subjects who scored higher on the linguistic test (those ranked sixth or better, namely A through F) were all enrolled in fourth-year and upper third-year level courses, while those who scored lower were generally enrolled in lower third-year level courses. Also taken into consideration here was whether the subjects had begun their study of French at the university or prior to it.

Table 3. Comparison of rank[4]



n=14

A separate questionnaire was administered to discover how much time subjects spent speaking French outside the classroom with, for example, other participants in the overseas study program, native speakers, and professors. It was assumed that those students who conversed more in French, particularly with native speakers or very advanced speakers such as professors and tutors, might have an advantage over those who rarely or never spoke French outside the classroom. The results of the questionnaire indicated that all of the subjects spoke little to no French in these out-of-class contexts. These results are somewhat surprising in light of the fact that

this group of subjects -- students preparing for study abroad -- had been selected on the assumption that they would be more motivated to learn and use French than other learners.

Return now to the three subjects who performed well on the pragmatic task despite relatively low scores on the linguistic task. Information derived from the additional variables discussed above strongly suggests that for both subjects J and K, the score they earned on the linguistic test may not be representative of their actual linguistic ability. That is, these subjects were probably more advanced linguistically than their score on that task indicates. One basis for this assumption is the fact that, like all of the subjects who ranked highest on this section (those ranked sixth or better), both of these subjects were enrolled in fourth-year level courses. In fact, J was enrolled in two advanced French courses that semester and K was enrolled in four. This information is provided on Table 4.

Table 4. Level of French course(s) enrolled in at time of data collection[5]

RANK	NNS	COURSE(S)
1	A	F473
1	B	F474, F425
3	C	F362
4	D	F401
4	E	F401
6	F	F425
7	G	----*
8	H	F313
8	I	F314
10	J	**F450, F401**
11	K	**F473, F401, F362, F316**
12	L	F313
13	M	----*
14	N	F313

*Course enrollment information unavailable

Furthermore, while most of the subjects began studying French at the high school level, K began learning French at the junior high or middle school level, giving him more years of exposure to the language. Finally, although the results from the questionnaire did not prove to be as useful as anticipated, they did indicate that J and K were two of only four subjects in the group who spent time speaking French with other participants in the program. Interestingly, the other two subjects were B and C, who also scored well on the linguistic task.

It does appear, then, that J and K may have been incorrectly ranked for linguistic ability and that they may not in fact present counter-evidence to the claim that linguistic competence is necessary for pragmatic competence; the discrepancy

tween their linguistic and pragmatic scores may be artificial. Since the additional information about course enrollment and time spent speaking French was not available for subject M, a more complete picture of her language abilities cannot be determined. Nevertheless, it is possible to claim that for thirteen out of fourteen, and possibly even fourteen out of fourteen subjects, a certain linguistic competence was necessary for pragmatic competence. The results obtained here provide convincing support for this claim.

Research question 2: Is linguistic competence sufficient for pragmatic competence?

According to the results illustrated in Table 3, it does not appear to be the case that linguistic competence is sufficient for pragmatic competence. This is clear from the results of subjects A, B, E, and F who performed considerably more poorly, relatively speaking, on the pragmatic task than on the linguistic task. If linguistic competence were sufficient for pragmatic competence, these subjects should have performed as well or better on the pragmatic task. This conclusion corresponds with Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford's (1990) and Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig's (1989) findings on advanced learners of ESL and with Wieland's (1990) advanced nonnative speakers of French. Linguistic competence does not guarantee pragmatic competence. The following section will present further evidence for this claim.

Task 3: Discourse Completion Test

The third task administered in this study was the DCT. Recall that the format of this test was identical to that of the role play questionnaire, except that the items were left open-ended. On the DCT, subjects were provided a tone and stimulus in English, and each item concluded with the phrase "You say:". In this paper, one speech act situation, complimenting, was selected for discussion; it will be discussed in light of its implications for the two research questions posed.

In her analysis of American complimenting behavior, Wolfson (1989b, 1983) noted that at the syntactic level, compliments were of a highly patterned nature. She found, for example, that 50% of all compliments given by middle-class speakers of American English were characterized by the formula in (2) below:

(2) NP (is/looks) (really) ADJ
Your house is really beautiful.

Two other common patterns made up another 29% of all compliments. These were:

(3) I really (like/love) NP
I really like your shirt.

(4) PRO is (really) (a) ADJ NP
That was really a great paper.

Wolfson discovered these syntactic patterns in her analysis of over twelve hundred compliments. The corpus of compliments analyzed in the present study was significantly more limited than Wolfson's since the control group included only nine NSs of French. The fact that the number of native speaker subjects was so small, however, made it particularly interesting to observe that a common syntactic pattern had revealed itself among the compliments provided by this group. On the DCT portion of this study, six out of nine NSs wrote a compliment which had the following structure[6]:

(5) PRO1 est (très) ADJ, NP1
Il est très joli, ton pull-over.
(it is very pretty your sweater)

The surface form of this sentence is straightforward, and the pattern should not be difficult for NNSs. A subject pronoun is followed by a form of the verb be, which is followed by an adjective optionally intensified by the equivalent of the English very, and the structure ends with a postposed noun phrase co-referenced with the subject pronoun. Postposing or preposing an element of the sentence in this way is a common way to express emphasis in French, a language which generally does not allow individual word stress.

Since the pattern of this compliment is relatively simple, one would expect that these intermediate-level subjects would have little trouble producing a native-like compliment. This was not the case, however, since, surprisingly, not one of the fourteen subjects produced this form on the DCT.

The compliment structure favored by eleven of the fourteen subjects mirrored the American English pattern in (3) above discovered by Wolfson[7]:

(6) J'aime (beaucoup/bien) NP J'adore NP
J'aime bien ton pull-over.
(I like really your sweater)

Although (3) was not the most common structure in English according to Wolfson's study, the high occurrence of (6), its French counterpart, in the nonnative responses may be due to learning effects. The structure in (6) is generally presented early to students as the simplest way to express likes and dislikes in French. While it is probably not explicitly taught that this structure also pertains to complimenting in French, learners may generalize it to this situation as well.

What is particularly striking about these results is that they have clear implications for the second research question addressed in this study. They lend support to the conclusion reached above that linguistic competence is not sufficient for pragmatic competence. There is virtually no doubt that any of these intermediate-level subjects could have produced the relatively simple, native-like complimenting pattern in (5); that is, the subjects had the linguistic competence to produce it. Yet, none of them did. Even if learners have the linguistic ability to produce the pragmatically appropriate structures employed by NSs in a given context, other factors must come into play.

The results of the complimenting data also had implications for the first research question addressed in the study, since they also support the conclusion that linguistic competence is necessary for pragmatic competence. An analysis of the nonnative speaker responses revealed several linguistic problems which could have an effect on the way in which the compliments would be received by NSs. For example, five of the subjects employed inappropriate vocabulary items, including, for example:

(7) J'aime bien *ta sweater*.
J'aime bien *ton pulli*.

While gestures or other non-verbal cues may clarify for the NS that his or her *pull-over* (or *pull*, for short) is being commented on, the improper word choice may cause some initial awkwardness. It is interesting to find that four of the fourteen subjects would have difficulty remembering this particular vocabulary item which is not only a fairly basic term but also a cognate. Difficulties arising from this kind of gap in vocabulary would likely be even more apparent when subjects are actually speaking to NSs as opposed to writing, when real time constraints and perhaps anxiety come into play.

Purely grammatical errors also appeared in the data, such as:

(8) C'est un pull fantastique. Où l'*achetez*-vous?
That's a fantastic sweater. Where do you buy it?

Again, the NS would probably understand the message, since the appropriate verb tense can easily be inferred from the context. However, an error of this type may bother the NS. This may result in some discomfort for both interlocutors, particularly if the NS is unaccustomed to speaking with NNSs of the language.

Although it cannot be stated in absolute terms, it seems likely that the kinds of linguistic errors found in these examples would hinder in some way the NNS's intended message, thereby having an effect on the NS's perception of the compliment. Thus, despite the appropriateness of the intended compliment, linguistic limitations may affect the overall success of the exchange[8].

In sum, the analysis of the complimenting data obtained from the DCT has had interesting implications for this study in that it has provided support for the conclusions reached for both of the research questions addressed. Although the examples presented to illustrate these arguments may appear somewhat oversimplified, they nevertheless provide very clear evidence in support of these conclusions.

CONCLUSION

This paper has investigated the relation between linguistic and pragmatic competence in the overall competence of the intermediate-level foreign language learner. Results from the study have strongly suggested that linguistic competence is necessary for pragmatic competence, but that it is not sufficient for it. That learn-

ers need to have a basic control of grammatical structures and vocabulary to make their message understood makes sense intuitively. Furthermore, existing research has already shown that linguistic ability alone does not guarantee the appropriate use of language in real language contexts. Thus, the conclusions reached here may not be surprising.

The obvious difficulty which arises with research of this type lies in the comparison of the two kinds of competence. In order to make hard claims about the relation between a learner's linguistic and pragmatic competence, reliable means of comparing real data must be employed. Comparing learners' rank according to their scores on different types of tasks, the method employed in this study, provided useful insights to the research questions addressed, based on real data. Nevertheless, the results obtained still are not entirely satisfactory since they are highly relative and, as such, cannot represent the learner's system in absolute terms. This study has contributed to the investigation of the role of linguistic and pragmatic competence in the learner's overall competence; in so doing, it has also emphasized the crucial need for the development of new means of measurement and comparison of these disparate types of data. Understanding the complex roles played by both types of competence will enable us to arrive at a more complete picture of what it means to know a language and to better prepare students for this challenging task.

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NOTES

[1]While it is clear that there is a great deal of overlap of the notion of *overall competence* with that of *communicative competence*, the term *overall competence* was preferred here since the theoretical framework of this study, Speech Act theory, examines discreet acts. Any conclusions reached, therefore, are restricted to specific speech act situations.

[2]Remember that the word best here always refers to the most appropriate, or *the most native-like*, response.

[3]As mentioned above, there was one item which did not result in a clear single *best response*. That is, two of the responses were nearly equally ranked by NSs. For this item only, the subjects were given two points for marking either of these two choices. Likewise, for several items, there were two responses which no NS marked as the best choice. Subjects earned zero points for marking either of these.

[4]The Spearman Rank Order Correlation is .43.

[5]Courses numbered in the 300s are third-year level courses and those in the 400s are fourth-year level courses. F313 and F314 are both advanced grammar courses. Oral practice is the focus of F316 and F475. F362 is a civilization course, F425 and F450 literature courses, F401 a course in the structure and development of French, and 473 an advanced writing course.

[6]The tone for this item was "friendly" and the stimulus was the following: "You are sitting with some French friends in a cafe. One of them is wearing a great sweater that you really like, and you want to compliment her on it. You say:".

[7]Two NSs produced this pattern; it is, therefore, an acceptable structure in French.

[8]This phenomenon has been termed *pragma-linguistic failure* by Thomas (1983) and contrasts with *socio-pragmatic failure*, which refers to a learner error resulting from either not knowing or not saying the appropriate response to a given social context.

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